

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 KUWAIT 002705

SIPDIS

STATE ALSO PASS USAID/W
STATE PLEASE REPEAT TO IO COLLECTIVE
STATE FOR PRM/ANE, EUR/SE, NEA/NGA, IO AND SA/PAB
NSC FOR EABRAMS, SMCCORMICK, STAHIR-KHELI, JDWORKEN
USAID FOR USAID/A, DCHA/AA, DCHA/RMT, DCHA/FFP
USAID FOR DCHA/OTI, DCHA/DG, ANE/AA
USAID FOR DCHA/OFDA:WGARVELINK, BMCCONNELL, KFARNSWORTH
USAID FOR ANE/AA:WCHAMBERLIN
ROME FOR FODAG
GENEVA FOR RMA AND NKYLOH
DOHA FOR MSHIRLEY
ANKARA FOR AMB WRPEARSON, ECON AJSIROTI AND DART
AMMAN FOR USAID AND DART

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREF](#) [IZ](#) [WFP](#)

SUBJECT: DART WESTERN IRAQ UPDATE 10 JUNE

SUMMARY

1. Interventions by the DART have paid dividends this week with increased security at food distribution points and improvements in supply procurement. Also this week, CARE began work on rehabilitating the frail water-treatment system of Al Hillah that serves 750,000 people. The project, funded by the DART, will increase the system's capacity from 16 to 75 percent in 10 weeks and will improve the water quality. The DART toured the facility with CARE on 10 June and also visited the city's maternal and pediatric hospital where CARE will rehabilitate its sewage system with DART funds. End Summary.

FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS IN AL HILLAH

2. Thirty-eight Ministry of Trade (MOT) warehouse and silo security personnel graduated from a Coalition-sponsored training program on 10 June in Al Hillah. The security guards will be integrated into the MOT facilities immediately with the assistance of Coalition forces. A second group of trainees will begin training on 11 June. This MOT/Coalition training program is the culmination of DART efforts to increase the capacity of MOT security forces.

3. The MOT silo manager received a letter from Coalition forces confirming MOT's independence from Al Hillah bureaucratic procedures to procure needed public distribution system (PDS) equipment and supplies. The DART requested this letter from Coalition Civil Affairs officers as a means to prevent delays in PDS distributions and to help the MOT expedite procurements of parts during distribution periods.

FUEL SUPPLIES INCREASE IN AL HILLAH

4. Gas tankers supply Al Hillah "fairly" regularly now with better distribution than four weeks ago, a member of the Coalition's Governorate Support Team (GST) in Babil told the DART on 10 June. Twenty-eight tankers entered Al Hillah on 10 June, and 32 came last week. He said the gasoline met roughly 30 to 40 percent of the city's needs. For the first time since the end of the war, he observed today a gas station receiving more fuel from tankers while it still had some gas in reserve. "That's a good sign," he said. Diesel is not a problem, he said, "There's plenty of that."

5. There remain shortages of liquid petroleum gas (LPG), the primary cooking fuel in Iraq, although the GST source said the distribution of the scarce supply had improved with an increased security presence. Last week, some distribution points became riotous. A growing problem is the theft of LPG canisters, often by police officers. The director of the LPG plant selected his most trustworthy security officers to work the night shift, the period of greatest loss. The director estimates the theft of about 40 canisters a day.

WATER IMPROVEMENTS IN AL HILLAH

6. CARE begins work on 14 June to rehabilitate the largest water treatment system in Al Hillah, using DART funds to

improve water quality and to increase capacity from 16 to 75 percent in less than three months. DART visited the system today and reviewed the work plan. The system, serving 750,000 people, is on the verge of collapse with only three of 12 pumps functioning.

17. Currently, city residents receive water for about two to three hours a day. Under optimal conditions, the system could produce 130,000 cubic meters per day; it now provides 30,000. CARE solicited bids from 10 contractors, and eight submitted a bid.

SEWAGE REPAIRS BEGIN AT AL HILLAH HOSPITAL

18. CARE contractors are beginning work on the failed sewage system at the Al Hillah Maternal and Children's hospital with DART funds that were recently approved. CARE will purchase and install two pumps that will flush sewage through the system, among other improvements. Currently, sewage has backed up into the doctors' residency. The hospital's director told the DART on 10 June that the system has not worked for ten years. He listed additional problems, including a poor central air-conditioning system. Because of the heat, the director said, "Most of the sick patients (went) out in the garden last night." He added that the cooling system has not worked for years. Other problems are: two of four elevators do not work; a shortage of oxygen, and a lack of certain drugs. "There is a deficiency of many drugs," the director said. The hospital's oxygen supply is also low, although the International Committee of the Red Cross said it would provide oxygen for Al Hillah. Diarrhea remains the greatest problem for children, followed by respiratory infections.

19. Many of the hospital's problems are chronic, although several have become less acute since the end of the war. "Everything nowadays," the hospital director said, "is now stable." He said some drugs had arrived at the hospital via normal Ministry of Health channels, but some essential drugs were not available. He said security had improved at all hospitals with the advent of new security officers patrolling city hospitals. He also said the hospital has become cleaner.

110. Many doctors in Al Hillah have complained about new Coalition forms, the hospital's director said, requiring government employees to denounce the Ba'ath party in order to receive their May salaries. The doctors are negotiating to add the words, "for the sake of the Iraqi people" to the end of the following sentence found in the form: "I will obey the laws of Iraq and all proclamations, orders, and instructions of the Coalition Provisional Authority." According to the Coalition's deputy military governor in Babil, the military will not change the sentence and the doctors will not be paid until they sign. On 8 June, medical professionals in Babil voted for a new general director of Babil's Ministry of Health from among four candidates. The incumbent did not win because he is a former Ba'athist, according to the hospital's director.

ACTED VISITS WITH THE DART

11. The Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) told the DART on 10 June that it plans on rehabilitating 20 rural water treatment units in Al Muthanna Governorate, and that each repair would cost approximately USD 8,000. Rural water units in Al Muthanna serve approximately five to ten percent of the rural population, according to ACTED. In Al Muthanna, ACTED said children suffered as a direct result of unclean water. "Here, malnutrition happens because of bad water," ACTED said. ACTED said it is aware of several thousand displaced residents in northern Al Muthanna whose homes were destroyed in the 1991 war. Many residents in the three affected villages have returned, but others live with relatives or friends, primarily in Samawah.

JONES